MONTREAL

FROM 1535 TO 1912

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BY

WILLIAM H. ATHERTON, Ph. D.

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PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT

The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., of Chicago, has great pleasure in announcing the preparation of a new history of Montreal by William Henry Atherton, Ph.D.

This work will be one of a series of histories already published by us of the great cities of America, including those of Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Rochester, N. Y., Syracuse, N. Y., Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, Ohio, Portland, Ore., Spokane, Tacoma, Seattle, as well as of the histories of various States.

Lately we have entered upon Canadian ground and we are preparing to publish works on British Columbia and Manitoba, the editors of these latter being respectively, His Honor Judge F. W. Howay and F. H. Schofield, B.A.

In making to the public our announcement of the preparation of the new History of Montreal by Dr. W. H. Atherton we beg to state that after having made careful inquiries as to the right person to undertake the new work we were glad to secure the services of one who, by his literary taste and ability, wide civic sympathies and well-known interest in many forward movements concerning the welfare of Montreal, is peculiarly fitted for the task and worthy of the confidence of the public, as the list of his Consulting Committee amply testifies.

Dr. Atherton's contributions to the sociological and city planning literature of this city, added to his experience as the Secretary of the City Improvement League (a body largely representative of the best citizens and associations of Montreal, both French and English, formed to promote civic pride in its people and to further its true greatness) give promise of his ability to prepare a history of Montreal from a new point of view and one that is particularly interesting in the present city planning era.

His work should be of interest to widely diverging groups of readers.

In accepting our invitation the author may rely upon the reputation of our firm for the production of a first-class publica-

tion. The mechanical side in printing and binding and publishing will be all that can be desired.

In particular, the volume will be beautifully and profusely illustrated with a valuable gallery of carefully chosen pictures of maps, historical houses, sites, scenes and incidents, and portraits of the makers of Montreal.

Every effort will be taken to make this feature as complete as possible, relying on the courteous promise of assistance of several gentlemen and societies interested in antiquarian research.

The illustrations will be chosen to form a graphic running commentary to elucidate the text of the narrative. Most of these pictures will be new to the general public. The accompanying views appearing in the prospectus are only partial indications of the still greater variety we shall incorporate in the forthcoming work.

The Coat of Arms of the City of Montreal

William H. Atherton, Ph. D.

THE SCOPE OF THE WORK

As indicated in the preceding foreword, the history of Montreal in preparation will treat of the varied and thrilling story of the fortunes of the city from its discovery by Jacques Cartier in 1535 to the present time. In addition, two volumes of biography of the makers of Montreal will supplement the necessarily limited pages of a continuous historical narrative.

The history will aim at giving a complete presentation of all the forms of life that have marked the various periods of the growth of the city. It will be an orderly narrative of the social, religious, municipal, political and economic forces that have moulded its destinies during the greater part of four hundred years.

Briefly stated, its special features will be:

1. The early history of the discovery of Hochelaga in 1535 down to the French settlement founded by Paul de Chomedey Sieur de Maisonneuve, in 1642.
2. The period extending from this date to the end of the "Seven Years' War," when the treaty of Paris in 1763 ratified the cession of "La Nouvelle France" to the British Government.
3. The various fortunes of the city under British rule from 1760 to the present day.

In the course of the story it will trace:

a. The histories of the various peoples of different racial origins, creeds and mentalities who have come into the life of the present cosmopolitan city and now dwell in unity and harmony.
b. The origin and development of the religious denominations which have made Montreal a city of churches.
c. The rise and development of Montreal as a centre of the great fur trade to its present greatness as a centre of commerce and of industries.
d. The development of Montreal as a world port, and the originating and distributing point for transportation inland by river, canal, lake and steel through North America.
e. The rise and growth of its municipal life; its many civic

activities, hygienic, sanitary and financial, etc.; its military, its police, its fire brigades.

f. The progress of its legislative and administrative systems in relation to the municipal, provincial and federal governments.

g. The rise of its banks and financial corporations.

h. The history of its educational life from the days of Marguerite Bourgeoys to the School Commissions, the High Schools, the Colleges, the great Universities of today, with their faculties of arts, science, medicine and law.

i. The rise and progress of the hospitals and institutions for the relief of the needy and suffering, and the great part taken in them by the women of Montreal from Jeanne Mance till today.

j. The rise of many other social and humanitarian movements and associations which are rearing a strong, healthy, upright and intelligent race of Canadians.

k. The story of the origin of its civic literature, its newspapers, its libraries, its art, its drama, its music, its sculpture and its architecture, its antiquities, its coins, its paper money; its natural history, its flora and fauna, its geology; its social customs, its sports and amusements.

l. The story of Montreal as the home of famous men and women who have become great discoverers, missionaries and pioneers of civilization, especially in North America, and the records of visits of distinguished personages and congresses, all of which mark out Montreal as one of the greatest cities of the world and the mother of the cities of the West.

m. Finally, the history will trace the development of the physical city from a fur traders' annual visiting post in Champlain's day and the fortified encampment of Maisonneuve's settlers, to the Greater Montreal of Today and Tomorrow, told from a city planning point of view—the story of its streets, its squares, cemeteries and parks, its struggles for internal city improvements—its lighting and paving—its buildings, old and new—the preservation of old sites and landmarks—the city's monuments—the need of a preconceived City Plan for the city of the near future. The whole to be copiously illustrated by maps and pictures.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

YOU are a grain of mustard seed that shall rise and grow until its branches overshadow the land. You are few, but your work is the work of God. His smile is on you and your children shall fill the land."

These words were spoken by Père Vimont in 1642 to the first colonists gathered around the altar erected near the spot now named La Place Royale on the inauguration of the settlement of Montreal. Two tablets on the front of the Custom House record these facts: "This site was selected and named in 1611 La Place Royale by Samuel de Champlain, the Founder of Canada," and "Near this spot on the 18th of May, 1642, landed the founders of Montreal commanded by Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve: Their first proceeding was a religious service." A near-by monument bearing the names of the first colonists and the above prediction also marks the scene.

The story of the gradual realization of this prophecy of the present and future greatness of Montreal has been told in English by several writers at intervals since 1839, when "Hochelaga Depicta, or the History and Present State of the City and Island of Montreal" appeared from the pen of Newton Bosworth, F. R. A. S. This was followed in 1870 by "Ville Marie, or Sketches of Montreal, Past and Present," by Alfred Sandham, life member of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal. Since then various sketches, gazetteers and handbooks have come from the press, the most known being the small but erudite and interesting handbook entitled "Sights and Shrines of Montreal," by William D. Lighthall, now President of the Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal.

These excellent works, which were mainly topographical or chronological in character, were necessarily restricted by their

limited scope and size. It has been thought that a volume of greater length which will allow the historian more scope to amplify the romantic tale indicated by previous writers and which traces the development of the city and island up to the present year of grace, will be opportune and acceptable to lovers of Montreal.

Moreover, such a volume as that now projected seems necessary; for we are at a period of great flux and change and progress. The city is being transformed, modernized and enlarged before our very eyes. Old landmarks are daily disappearing and there is a danger of numerous memories of the past passing with them.

We are growing so wonderfully in wealth through the importance of our commerce and in the size of our population by the accretion of newcomers of many national origins and creeds, to whom for the most part the history of the romantic story of Montreal is a sealed book, that a fuller presentation of our development and growth is called for, to supplement the previous histories and to meet the conditions of the hour.

It is hardly necessary, therefore, to offer any apology for the present undertaking. For if the continuity of a city's growth and development is to be preserved in the memory of the citizens of each generation, this can only be done through the medium of an historical survey, issued at certain suitable intervals, such as the one now offering, and connecting the present with the past, and presenting to the new generation, out of the intricate chain of events and varying vicissitudes that have woven themselves into the texture of the city's organic life, the story of those forces which have moulded its growth and have produced those resultant characteristic features which make it the individualized city of today and none other.

Montreal being a unique city, with a personality of its own, its history, beyond that of any city of the new world, is particularly interesting and fruitful for such a retrospect. Dealing with the fortunes of several peoples, the original inhabitants of Hochelaga visited by Jacques Cartier in 1535, the French colonists from 1642 and the Anglo-Saxons and Gaels from their influx in 1760, together with the steady addition of those of other national origins of late years, the story of Montreal, passing over the greater part of four centuries, is full of romance and colour and quickly moving incidents; of compelling interest to the ordi-

nary student, but how much more so to those who have any way leagued their fortunes with it, and assisted in its progress and in its making!

Such cannot dip into the pages of the history of this ancient and modern city without finding fresh motives for renewed enthusiasm and for deeper pride.

For Montreal is still in the making, with its future before it.

The forthcoming work is especially dedicated to those who would realize the duties of good citizenship and it is the hope of the writer that it may serve to deepen the sense of civic pride now happily being cultivated here. To foster this civic pride is the justifying reason why he has been induced by his friends to launch on a long and laborious task, sweetened though it may be by the pleasure anticipated of communion with the scenes and thoughts and deeds of a romantic past and a wonderfully progressive present.

All history is profitable. Perhaps, however, civic history has not been cultivated sufficiently. The present work is an attempt to repair this by interesting Montrealers in their citizenship so that by placing before them the deeds of the doers of the past, they may realize they are dwellers in no mean city. We would hope that something of the spirit of love for their cities, of the Romans, Athenians, or Florentines, might be reincarnated, here in Montreal. Good citizenship would then be thoroughly understood as the outcome of a passionate love of all that is upright, noble and uplifting in human conduct, applied to the life of a city by which it shall be made beautiful and lovable in the sight of God and man. For this purpose the life story of any city that has reached any eminence and has a worthy past should be known by good citizens so that they begin to love it with a *personal* love.

For like each nation, each city has its own individuality, its own characteristic entity, its own form of life which must be made the most of by art and thoughtful love.

This is not merely true of the physical being of a city from the city planner's point of view. There is also a specific character in the spiritual, artistic, moral and practical life of every city that has grown into virility and made an impress on the world.

Every such city is unique; it has its predominant virtues and failings. You may partially eliminate the latter and enlarge

the former, but the city being human, —the product of the sum total of the qualities and defects of its inhabitants— it takes on a character, a personality, a mentality all its own.

Civic history then leads us to delve down into the origin of things to find out the causes and sources of that ultimate city character which we see reflected today in such a city as Montreal.

The research is fascinating and satisfactory to the citizen who would know his surroundings, and live in them intelligently with consideration for the diverse view points of those of his fellow citizens who have different national origins and different mental outlooks from his own.

Yet while this city character is in a way fixed, still it is not so stable but that it will be susceptible to further development in the times that are to come with new problems and new situations to grapple with.

The peculiar pleasure of the reading of the history of Montreal will be to witness the development of its present character from the earliest days of the small pioneering, religious settlement of French colonists, living simple and uneventful days, but chequered by the constant fear of the forays of Indian marauders on to the "Castle Dangerous" of Ville Marie, through its more mature days of city formation, then onward through the difficult days of the fusion of the French and English civilization starting in 1760, to the complex life of the great and prosperous cosmopolitan city of today, the port and commercial centre of Canada—the old and new *regime* making one harmonious unity but with its component parts easily discernible *e pluribus unum*. The city's motto is aptly chosen, "*Concordia Salus.*"

Much there will be learned in the history of Montreal of the past that will explain the present affairs and the mentality of its people. *Tout savoir, c'est tout pardonner.*

A clue to the future will also be afforded beforehand. Certainly it will be seen that Montreal is great and will be greater still, because great thoughts, high ideals, strenuous purposes have been born and fostered within its walls.

The thinking student will witness the law of cause and effect, of action, and reaction, ever at work, and will read design where the undisciplined mind would only see chaos and blind forces at work.

Recognizing that the city is a living organism with a personality of its own, he will watch with ever increasing interest the life emerging from the seed and at work in all the varying stages of its growth and development. He will see the first rude beginning of the city, its struggles for existence, its organized life in its social and municipal aspects, its beginnings of art and learning, the building of its churches, the conscious struggles of its people to realize itself, the troubles of its household, the battle of virtue and vice, its relation to other cities, the story of its attacks from without, the conflicts with opposing ideas, the influx of new elements into the population, the adaptation of the organism to new habits of government and thought, to new methods of business, and the inauguration of untried and new industrial enterprises, the growth of its harbour, and its internal and external commerce, the conception of its own destiny as one of the great cities of the world—all these and more it is the purpose of a history of Montreal to unfold to the thoughtful citizen who would understand the life in which he is playing his part not as a blind factor but as an intelligent co-operator in the intricate and absorbing game of life.

But let it not be thought that while peering into the past we shall become blind to the present. In this History of Montreal we shall picture the busy world as we see it round us. Here are heroic and saintly deeds being done today in our midst. The foundations of new and mighty works even surpassing those of the past are being laid in the regions of religion, philanthropy, art, science, commerce, engineering, government and city planning this very hour, and their builders are unconsciously building unto fame.

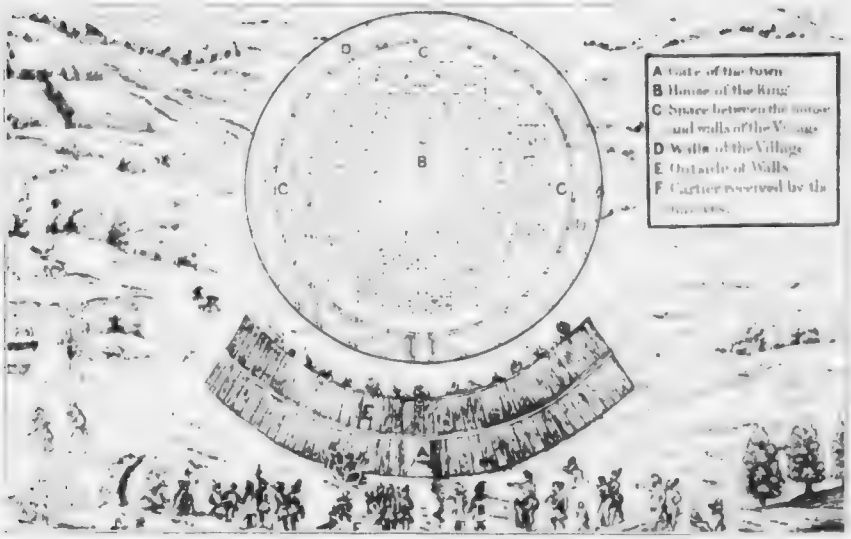
Besides, therefore, portraying the past, we would wish to present a moving picture of the continued development of Montreal from the beginning, tracing it to the living present from the "mustard seed" so long ago spoken of by Père Vimont in reference to the handful of his fellow pioneers assembled at Mass on the day of the arrival on May 18, 1642, at the historic spot marked today by the monument in Place Royale, to the *mighty* tree of his prophecy that now has covered the whole island of Montreal, and by the boldness, foresight and enterprise of Montreal's master builders, has stretched its conquering arms of streams and iron across the mighty continent discovered by Jacques Cartier in 1535.

What Montreal was and is, we know. Its future we can only surmise. But it is bound to be a great one. Its position, with its mountain in the centre and its encircling waterways, with the glorious St. Lawrence at its feet, proclaims it as the ideal location for one of the greatest cities of the world. It is no cause for wonder that Jacques Cartier, visiting it in 1535, after naming the mountain "Mount Royal" in honor of his King, Francis I of France, should have recommended the site as favorable for a settlement, and that this should have been endorsed by Champlain in 1611 and carried into execution by Maisonneuve in 1642. They had the instinct of the city planner—that is all. That they did not err, the history of Montreal will abundantly show.

WM. H. ATHERTON.

Montreal, July, 1912.

Monument to Jacques Cartier, discoverer of Montreal, erected at St. Henri, Montreal

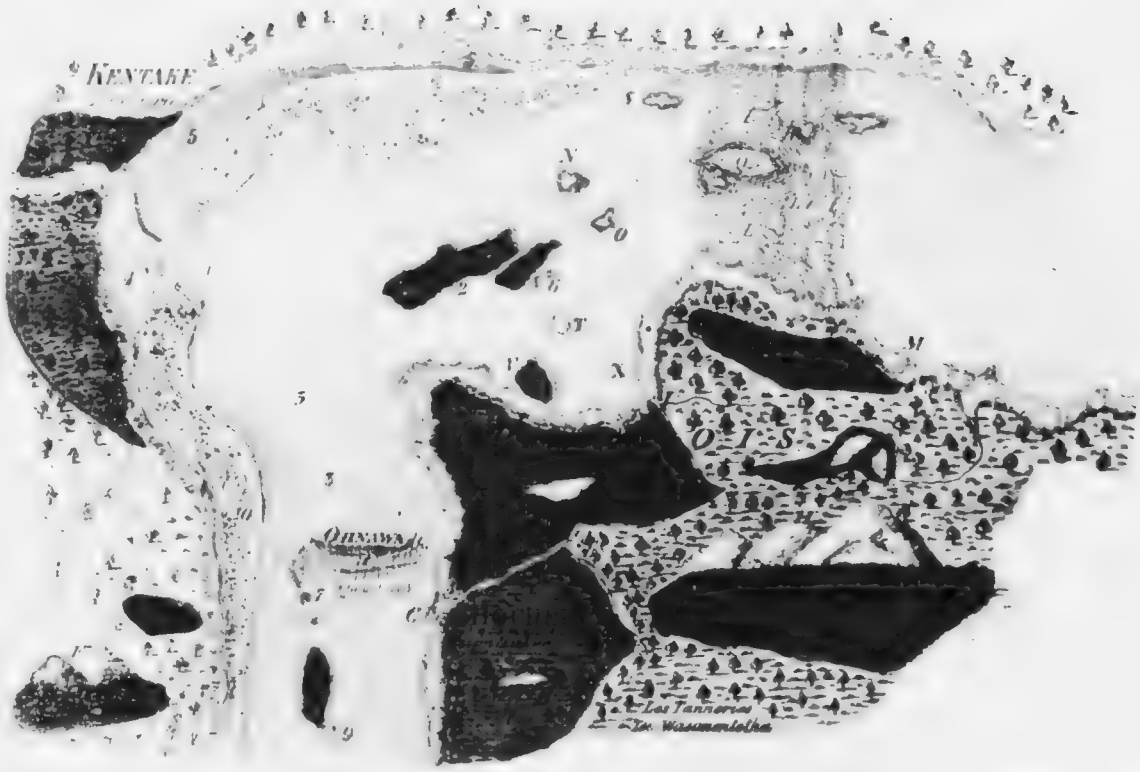


1535

Jacques Cartier received by the Indians at Hochelaga

Explanation of Map on next page.

A-Piece of land which I ordered to be cleared.
B-Small pond.
C-Small island where I had a stone wall erected.
D-Small stream where barques are lying.
E-Prairies where Indians encamp when coming to this country.
F-Mountains seen at a distance.
G-Small pond.
H-Mount Royal.
I-Small stream.
L-The Saut.
M-Place where the Indians begin their portage for the north.
N-Place where one of our men and an Indian were drowned.
O-Small, rocky island.
P-Other small island where birds build their nests
Q-"Heron" Island
R-Other islands of the Saut
S-Small island
T-Round Islet
V-Other islet, half of which is covered with water
W-Other islet where water fowls are found
Y-Prairies
Z-Small river
2-Rather fine and large island
3-Places which appear bare at low water and where the current is very strong
4-Prairies covered with water swamps
5-Rather low and marshy land
6-Other small island
7-Small rocks
8-Helen's Island
9-Small island barren of trees
10-Marshes in the "Grand Saut



1611

Map prepared by P. L. Morin from a sketch of Sault St. Louis (Kahnawake) and part of the south shore of the Island of Montreal made by Champlain in 1611

(See preceeding page for explanation)

1655

The house of a rich trader, Charles Lecroix Hubert, built in 1655, remodeled about 1750, and still standing on St. Jean Baptiste Street. The walls are three feet three inches thick

1662

St. Gabriel farm house, Point St. Charles, situated on the river bank opposite northeast end of the Nun's, or St. Paul, Island. This farm property was donated to the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame by Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve in 1662, and the erection of this building dates from that time.

1684

SEMINARY OF MONTREAL

This is the seigneurial residence of the "Gentlemen of the Seminary" — dates from 1684. The chronometer [illegible] of the oldest clocks in America

1694

Two old watch towers built in 1694 by M. de Belmont, a Sulpician Missionary at the "Mountain Fort". In the western tower Marguerite Bourgeoys taught the Indian children. In the eastern tower, which was used afterwards as a chapel, an Indian brave and his grandchild are buried. These towers still stand on Sherbrooke street, West, in the grounds of the Grand Seminary

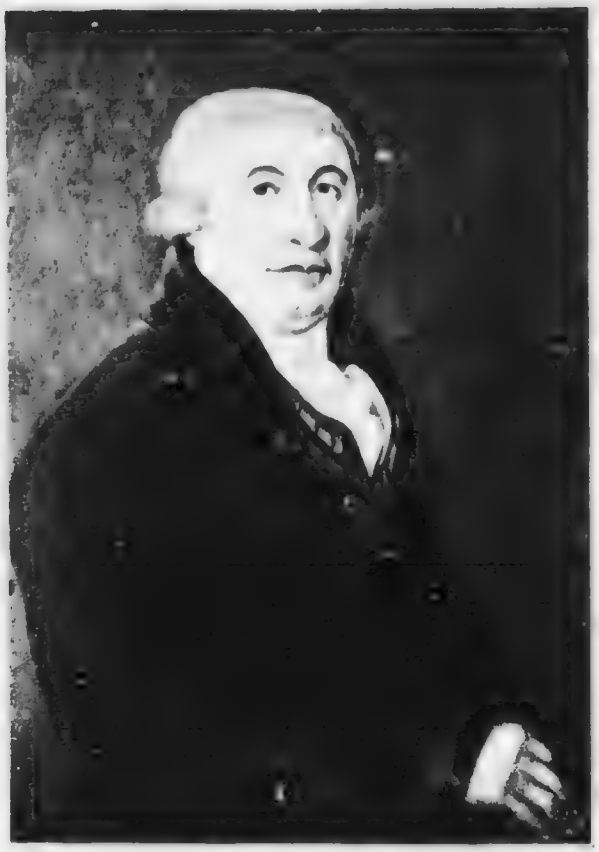
Erected 1759

THE NORTH-WESTERS

The Northwest Fur Company's stores, around which so much history in adventure, discovery and commerce centers, are on the southwest corner of Vaudreuil and St. Therese streets. John Jacob Astor, the founder of the Astor fortunes lived in this building and stored here Canadian beaver, racoon and muskrat skins, Canadian coatings etc., all of which he sold in 1789 at No. 81 Queen street, New York. Still standing

1792

Old St. Gabriel Church on St. Gabriel street, erected 1792. The first "Scotch" church in the province. The bell in the steeple of this church is said to have been "the first Protestant bell sounded in Canada



THE HON. JAMES McGILL

A prosperous Montreal merchant, the founder of McGill University. He was born in Glasgow, October 6, 1744, and died at Montreal, December 18, 1813

About 1760

The Year of Capitulation. Published by Jefferys, the corner of St. Martin's Lane in the Strand.

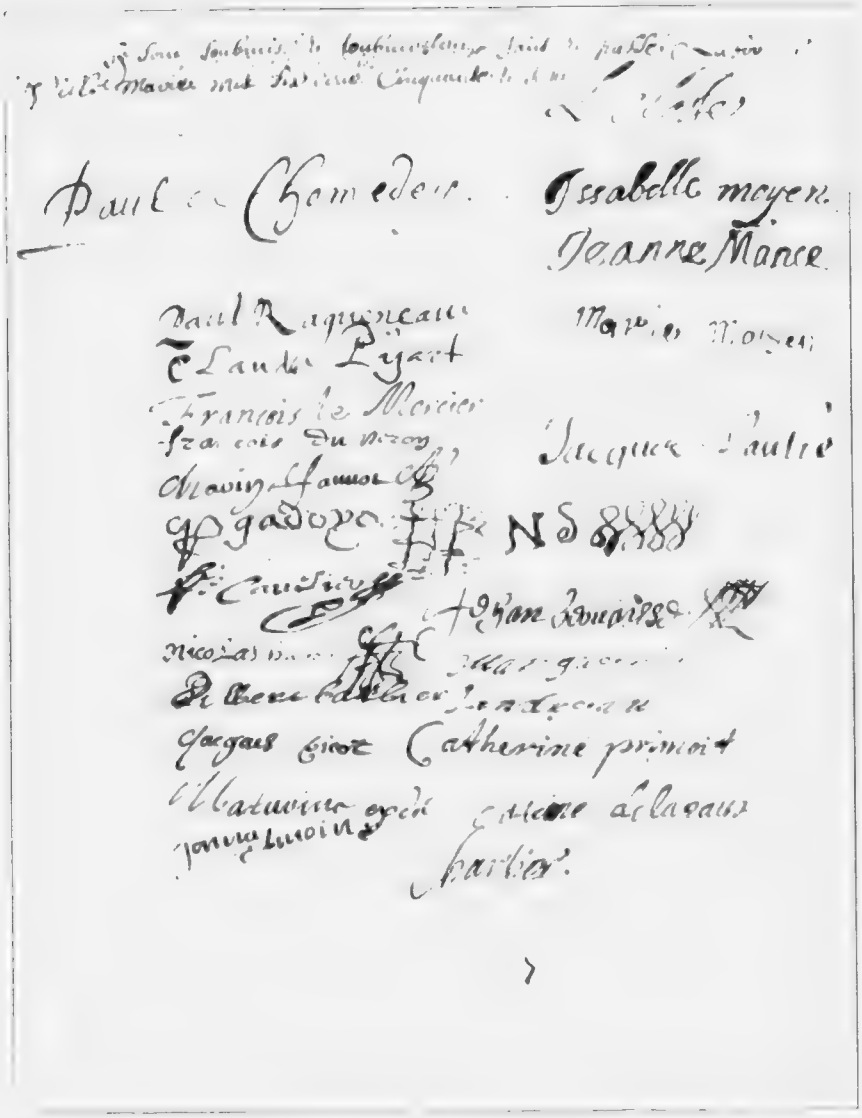
Photographed from the original in the British Museum

1784

Very *rare* view of Montreal. View taken from the mountain showing the fortifications, chateau, Jesuits' church

MONTREAL FOUNDED 1642

In 1905 this monument, by Philip Hebert, was erected to the memory of the first Governor of Montreal, Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve, and commemorates, with its bas reliefs and supplementary statuary, several of the principal personages and dramatic incidents in the early days of the settlement.



1657

Notable signatures to a marriage contract in 1657. Paul de Chomedey, Jeanne Mance, Lambert Closse, etc. There were then about 300 inhabitants in Montreal

1642

This monument erected to the memory of the first Colonists of Montreal, 1642, near Place Royale, marks the spot where the first religious service was held, and where Father Vimont prophesied the future greatness of Montreal, which should grow like a mustard seed until its branches should overshadow the land.

1606-1673

JEANNE MANCE

One of the first white women in Montreal. First nurse and superintendent of the first hospital in Montreal 1642. The pioneer of the great women organizations of Montreal

Drawn by E. P. [illegible]

MONTREAL 1647-80

The cemetery [illegible] on the present custom house. D-Wooden Point built in 1648. The site of Maisonneuve's house. [illegible] where Frothingham & Workman's [illegible] on St Paul Street. [illegible] and Dieu at the corner of St Sulpice and St Paul Streets. A-The fort built in 1642

IN THE DAYS OF THE OLD REGIME.

St. Amable street, a narrow thoroughfare west of the lower part of Jaques Cartier Square and near the spot where the Chateau de Vandreuil once stood, was a fashionable quarter in the gay days before the "Capitulation." The house marked by a projecting sign "The Woodbine" is said to have been the site of a saloon for two hundred years.

1758

MAP OF MONTREAL, 1758, BEFORE THE CAPITULATION

The City was then bounded: On the north by a stream and marsh, now marked by Craig street; on the west by Fortification Lane and upper part of McGill street of to-day; on the east by the Place Viger station of to-day; on the south by the little river St. Pierre and the St. Lawrence. This plan of the fortifications was published in London by Thomas Jefferys, Geographer to his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, January, 1758.

From a sketch by R. G. Mathews, Esq

First residence and store of the Hon James McGill, founder of McGill University

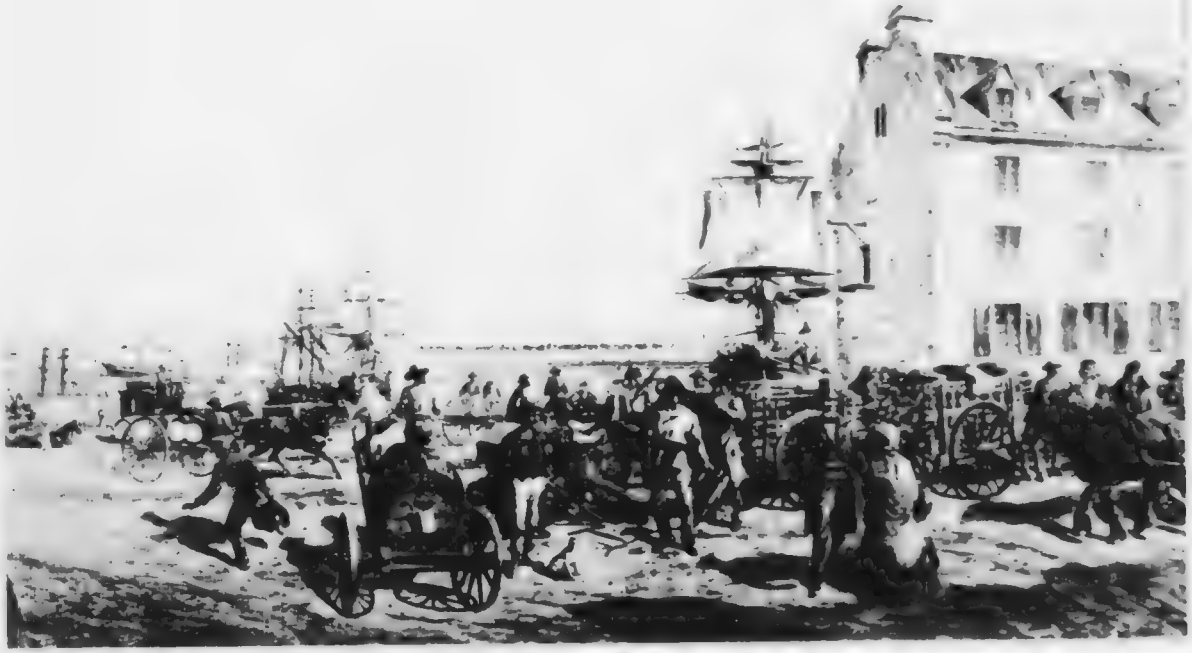
1810

A view of the city of Montreal and the river St. Lawrence from the mountain by S. Walsh, Forty-ninth Regiment, 1810

From a picture by R. A. Spence.

PLACE D'ARMES IN 1830

The old and new Notre Dame churches. The old church in the foreground was built in 1672. The present church was commenced in the year 1824, opened for public worship in 1829. The old church was gradually removed. About 1845 the belfry tower and steeple, which had been standing for several years a landmark in the square, were at last pulled down.



CUSTOM HOUSE SQUARE — 1830

This copy of a painting represents Custom House Square as it was in 1830. The three story building is the [illegible] by Charles d'Alleboust; occupied in 1830 by Andrew Shaw, and the site of the present Custom House. In olden times [illegible] often used as a wood market. A water cart with its driver is seen in the foreground, being taken to the river to [illegible] by the Quebec steamers, seen to the left in the King's Basin, and the ferry boat Iron Duke lying [illegible] vessels at that time, are to be seen in the port. The prominent figure in the foreground dressed in a frock coat [illegible] to be that of the well-known William Workman, of the firm of Frothingham & Workman, Mayor of Montreal.

Drawn by John Murray

About 1845
St. James Street, West. The Bank of Montreal on the right

Drawn by John Murray

About 1845

Notre Dame looking west from Government House—Chateau de Ramesay—The tapering spire is that of Christ Church Cathedral—This Church was opened for Divine Service on October 9, 1844—destroyed by fire on the night of December 10, 1856

From a sketch taken by John Murray and engraved by Bourne
About 1845
Notre Dame Street, looking east from St. John Street. Christ Church Cathedral, on the left beyond Notre Dame

Drawn by John Murray. Engraved by Bourne.

1845
Place d'Armes

Engraved by R. A. Sproule

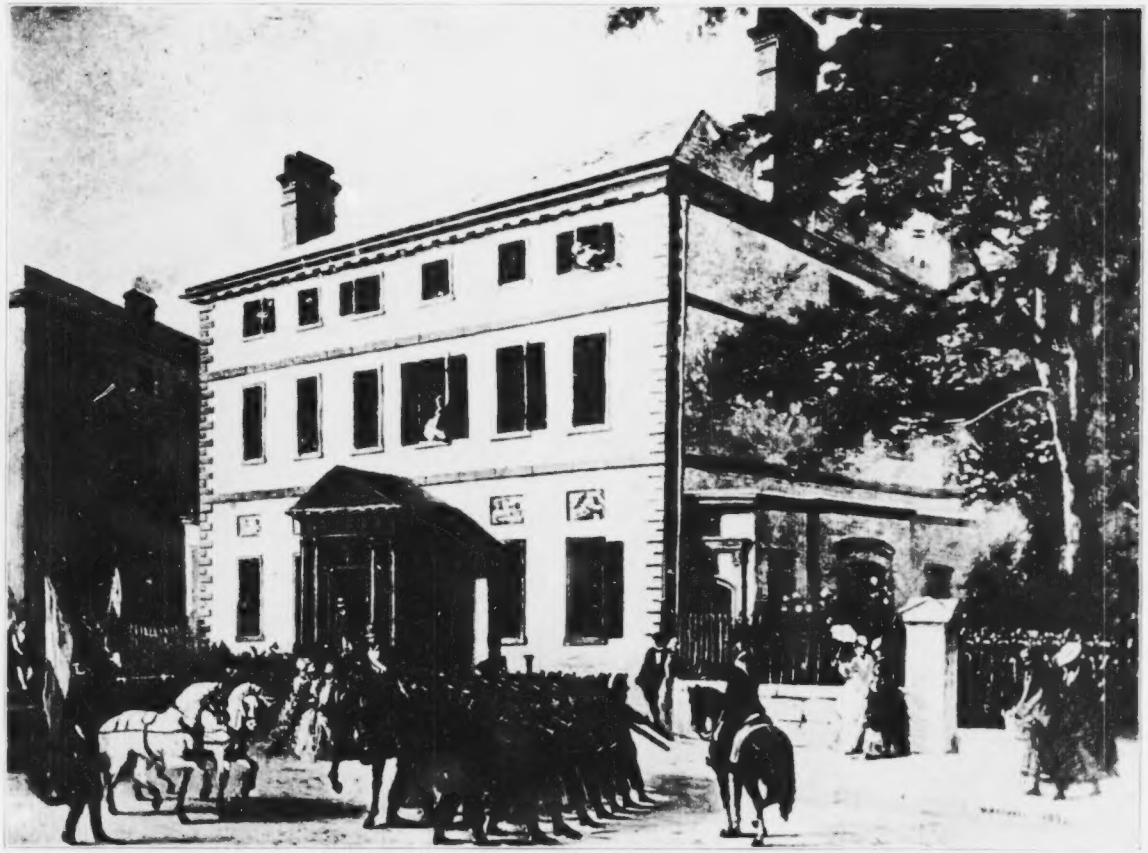
1830

Montreal from St. Helen's Island

1830
View of the Champ de Mars, Montreal, 1830

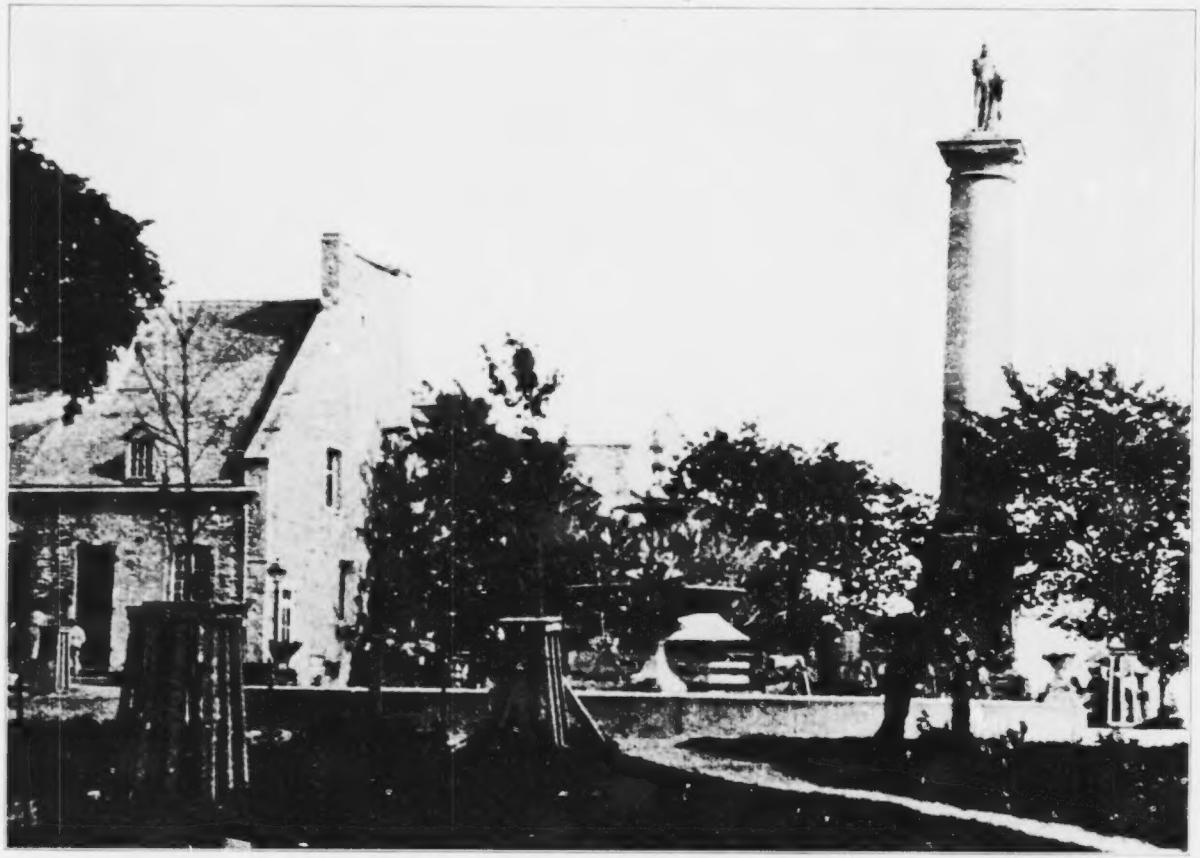
Drawn by Whitefield 1852

View of Montreal in 1852. The buildings in the central foreground are those of McGill University



1872

The old Bank of Montreal, afterwards the Banque du Peuple. The "Flaxman" bas reliefs on the exterior are now inserted in the portico of the present General Post Office, which marks the old site of the above bank. The above picture was taken in 1872 by W. Raphael and represents a St. Jean Baptiste procession.



About 1875

NELSON'S MONUMENT

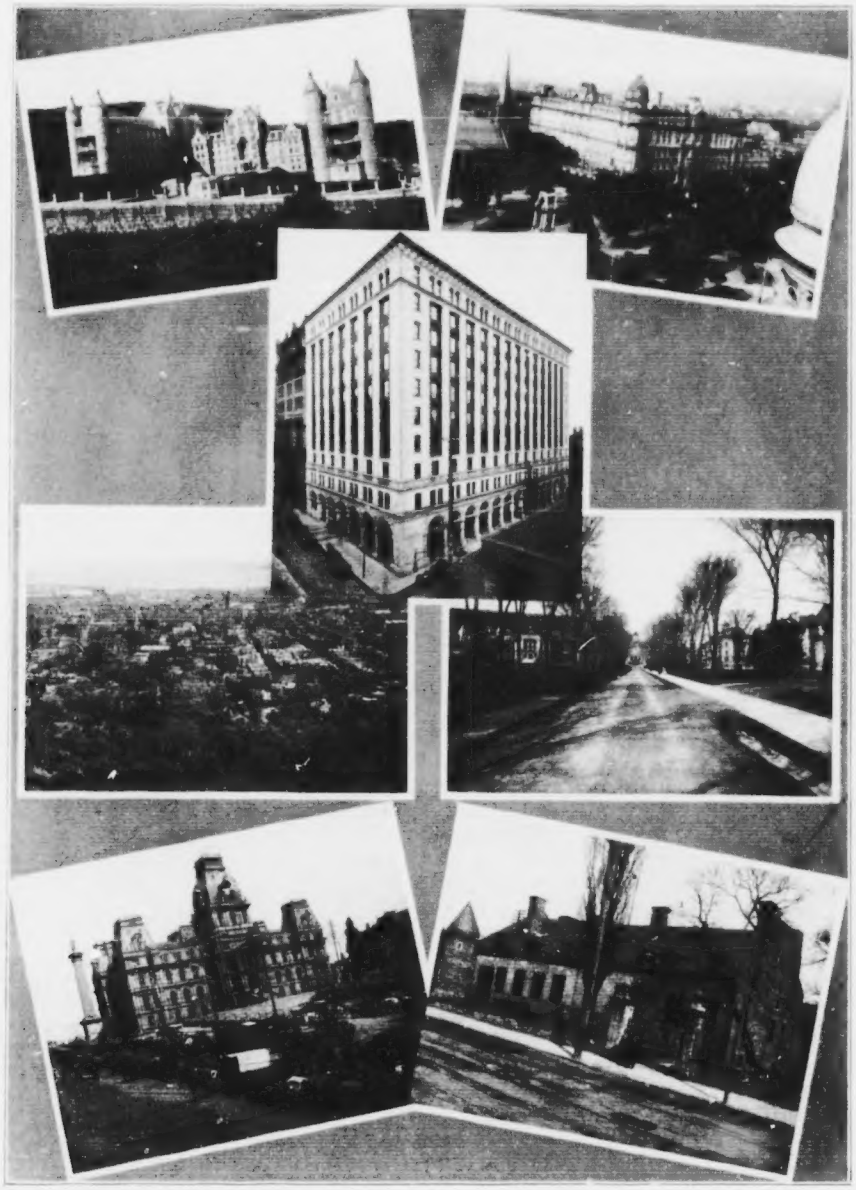
The building on the left is the house originally built in 1720 by Baron de Becancourt. It became the store of the Campagnie des Indes, which in the French times answered to the Hudson's Bay Company. This was also the residence of the Hon. James McGill, founder of McGill University. It was demolished in 1903.

THE OLD "GREY" NUNNERY

As it looked from McGill street in the late sixties before the new building was erected on Dorchester street. This site was that of the original General Hospital, founded by M. Charron in 1692, and transferred to Madame de Youville in 1747. A portion of these buildings still remains in 1912, being employed as warehouses. The new Custom House is to be built on this spot.

THE OLD "BLACK" NUNNERY

The northeast portion of the garden of the convent of the "Congregation de Notre Dame," founded by Marguerite Bourgeoys in 1659. The present buildings are those of the third convent, the previous two having been burned. The projected extension of St. Lawrence Boulevard to the harbor necessitates the demolition of the convent and the adjoining church of Notre Dame de Pitié.



Royal Victoria Hospital — Transportation Building, 1912 — Windsor Hotel

Modern Montreal from the Mountain — McGill University Grounds

The City Hall and Jacques Cartier Square — Chateau de Ramesay, 1912; built in 1705

MONTREAL OF TO-DAY